

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

JCS

USCINCEUR

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 002838

E.O. 11652:GDS 31 DEC 82

TAGS: MILI, MASS, XA

SUBJECT:PRESS GUIDANCE: MILITARY SURVEY TEAM - GABON

REFERENCES: (A) STATE 303012; (B) STATE 000807;

(C)

DJAMENA 0031

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JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE

1. FOLLOWING IS PRESS GUIDANCE WITH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WHICH WOULD BE USED ONLY IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES RE SURVEY TEAM, REFTELS A AND B.

2. PRESS GUIDANCE: QUOTE. IN RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT BONGO'S PERSONAL REQUEST, A SMALL TEAM OF US MILITARY OFFICERS WILL BE IN GABON ON A FACT FINDING MISSION IN EARLY JANUARY. THE RESULTS OF THEIR FINDINGS WILL PROVIDE THE GABONESE WITH A BASIS FOR ASSESSING THE DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES OF THEIR ARMED FORCES AND POSSIBLE FUTURE NEEDS. UNQUOTE

Q. WHAT IS THE COMPOSITION OF THE SURVEY TEAM?

A. THREE OFFICERS; ONE EACH FROM THE ARMY, NAVY, AND AIR FORCE.

Q. ARE ANY US MILITARY NOW ASSIGNED TO GABON?

A. NONE ARE ASSIGNED AND NO SUCH ASSIGNMENTS ARE CONTEMPLATED AT THIS TIME. ATTACHE PERSONNEL STATIONED IN CHAD ARE ACCREDITED TO GABON.

Q. HOW LONG WILL THE SURVEY TEAM BE IN GABON?

A. APPROXIMATELY 10 TO 15 DAYS.

Q. WHAT ARE THE THREATS TO GABON'S SECURITY?

A. THAT IS AN ISSUE THAT SHOULD APPROPRIATELY BE ADDRESSED BY THE GABONESE.

Q. ARE THERE FRENCH MILITARY ADVISERS STATIONED IN GABON?

A. YES, THERE ARE SOME FRENCH MILITARY THERE.

Q. WHAT IS A "SECURITY ASSISTANCE" PROGRAM?

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A. ANY MILITARY ITEMS PROVIDED UNDER PART II OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961 AS AMENDED, OR CREDIT SALES UNDER THE FOREIGN MILITARY SALES ACT, AS AMENDED. THIS WOULD INCLUDE DEFENSE ARTICLES AND DEFENSE SERVICES, INCLUDING TRAINING.

Q. IS THE USG CONTEMPLATING PROVIDING SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO GABON?

A. NO DECISION HAS YET BEEN MADE ON THE FORM OR EXTENT OF U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE, IF ANY, THAT MIGHT BE PROVIDED TO GABON.

Q. HAS GABON EVER RECEIVED ANY SECURITY ASSISTANCE FROM THE US?

A. NO GRANT MILITARY AID OR CREDIT ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN GIVEN TO GABON, BUT IN FISCAL YEAR 1975 GABON PURCHASED FOR CASH 218,000 DOLLARS IN MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM THE US.

3. REQUEST EMBASSY LIBREVILLE COMMENTS, IF ANY PROPOSED GUIDANCE, AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

4. FOR EMBASSY NDJAMENA - IF GOC RAISES QUESTION OF US MILITARY TEAM IN GABON, EMBASSY SHOULD RESPOND THAT ON JAN. 2, 1973 IT UNDERSTANDS THE PRESIDENT DETERMINED THAT GABON WAS ELIGIBLE FOR THE PURCHASE OF DEFENSE ARTICLES AND DEFENSE SERVICES UNDER THE FOREIGN MILITARY SALES ACT, AS AMENDED, AND GIVEN PRESENT CONGRESSIONAL CLIMATE AGAINST EXPANDING THE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES ELIGIBLE FOR US SECURITY ASSISTANCE, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME TO EXPAND SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO INCLUDE CHAD. KISSINGER

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